United Nations E/2018/SR.24

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 June 2018

Original: English

2018 session
27 July 2017–26 July 2018
Integration segment

Summary record of the 24th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 3 May 2018, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) ..... (South Africa)

Contents

Agenda item 8: Integration segment (*continued*)

Session 5: Panel discussion on "Leveraging technology and innovation to support resilience and inclusiveness in Africa in the context of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063"

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent as soon as possible to the Chief of the Documents Management Section (dms@un.org).

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org/).

18-07090 (E)

Please recycle

In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), President, Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 8: Integration segment (*continued*)

Session 5: Panel discussion on "Leveraging technology and innovation to support resilience and inclusiveness in Africa in the context of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063"

1. **The President** said that Session 5 would address the particular challenges of African countries. The discussion would explore how technological and innovative solutions applied to specific contexts had the potential to mitigate a significant number of the vulnerabilities of the continent, spurring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project), moderator, said that Africa faced enormous development challenges in the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. The volatility of oil and other commodity prices further demonstrated the continent's vulnerability to global economic shocks due to reliance on a narrow base of raw-commodity exports. The Ebola virus crisis had illustrated the urgent need to build resilient health systems, including through promoting research and development for public health needs and using technologies for data collection and dissemination of information. Tackling the digital divide, building the capacity of data systems, boosting productive capacity and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship would be critical for maximizing the role of technology and innovation in boosting resilience and inclusive growth in Africa. Against that background the panellists would explore the synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 to build sustainable and resilient societies.

3. The interactive discussions would be guided by the questions of how integrated public policy responses could support African countries in addressing vulnerabilities; what challenges African countries encountered in the formulation of integrated policies; what their experience had been in using technology and innovation to strengthen resilience and inclusion in an integrated manner; and how the United Nations development system and traditional, new and emerging development partners could support African countries in leveraging technology and innovation to support resilience and inclusiveness in the implementation of national, subregional and continental strategies.

4. She encouraged participants to be active on social media, using the hashtag #resilienceintegrated, during the interactive discussion, so that the discussion could extend beyond the confines of the conference room.

5. **Ms. Jallah** (Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Liberia), panellist, accompanying her remarks by a digital slide presentation, said that her country was not oblivious to the challenges it faced on all levels to ensure sustainability and resilience in the face of both internal and external shocks, which exposed its vulnerabilities in all the dimensions of sustainable development and its political and institutional structures as well. The key focus was finding solutions to strengthen resilience and preparedness to respond to specific threats and mitigate vulnerabilities. Gains in science and technology and innovation could be used as a tool to support gains in the daily life of its people.

6. The recent Ebola outbreak in Liberia illustrated those difficulties. Situated in West Africa with a population of over 4 million, the country faced a number of challenges in its health system, including high maternal and infant mortality rates. The first case of Ebola in West Africa had been reported in Guinea in December 2013; there had been over 28,000 cases and 11,000 deaths in the region. A state of emergency had been declared in Liberia in August 2014. One of the main factors contributing to the spread of the virus had been the weak public health surveillance system and its inability to detect the disease and respond to it in a timely manner. The panic over the virus had led to sensational newspaper headlines, even depicting the Government in a competition with the virus that the disease was winning.

7. One of the major game changers in fighting Ebola had been the deployment of technology that enabled heightened surveillance and contact tracing and improved laboratory technology that allowed for faster diagnosis and reduced turnaround time for lab results, as it was no longer necessary to send samples out of the country for testing. The health management information system that existed before the Ebola outbreak had been adequate for the country's ordinary needs but it had not stood up to the crisis. The post-Ebola surveillance strategy was aligned with the resilient health system plan and with the available technology. During the Ebola crisis from 2014 to 2016, Liberia had a weak health system, and it was working towards the goal of a resilient health system that could detect, prevent and mitigate disease outbreak.

8. In establishing the framework for the new Health Information System there had been much discussion over open source versus proprietary software. Regional coordination was also a priority, as Sierra Leone and Guinea had also been affected by the Ebola outbreak. National ownership and leadership of any new system was essential. Major challenges to the development of any new system were the sporadic electricity supply, poor road infrastructure, limited Internet connection and very little systems integration. Once those basic problems were addressed, Liberia would be in a better situation should another disease outbreak occur because it would be possible to monitor the situation much more easily.

9. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project) asked about the role of civic engagement and public-private partnership in mitigating the challenges faced and enhancing the government's capacity to respond to future health crises.

10. **Ms. Jallah** (Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Liberia) said that inclusive engagement of the people and close cooperation with partners in other African countries toward common goals and sharing of best practices were of prime importance. Donor partners had also played a crucial role in raising capital for the technology which had allowed the health care system to gain control of the disease.

11. **Ms. Gawanas** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa), panellist, said that the multi-dimensional development challenges faced in Africa required a comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to its vulnerabilities, for example natural disasters, drought or health crises such as the Ebola virus. In the area of maternal mortality in particular, Africa was far behind the rest of the world. African economies were also vulnerable to external shocks owing to their over-reliance on natural resource exports, which had a negative impact on growth and sustainable development and affected the resilience and cohesion of societies. Comprehensive and integrated policy responses were needed that took into account such emerging threats as terrorism, forced migration and epidemics in order to increase preparedness and retain hard-won gains in Africa.

12. Pro-poor and gender sensitive policies would be critical for disaster risk reduction and the ability to respond to and recover from crises. Resilient and inclusive societies were deeply rooted in respect for human rights, reducing inequality and empowerment. The African Union Agenda 2063 had set a target of reducing 2030 levels of poverty by 30 per cent. Some 390 million Africans, representing half the world's poor, were still in poverty. Poverty eradication must be mainstreamed in order to achieve the goal of leaving no one behind. The national coordination mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda must harness the linkages between the Goals and targets. Poverty eradication could not be achieved in isolation from the provision of basic services — clean water, sanitation, electricity, health care and education. Empowerment of women and youth entailed action across the entire 2030 Agenda, and advancing regional integration would boost productivity and access to jobs. The power of market women and those who worked the soil should not be underestimated; the informal economy, where most women were employed, should receive greater attention.

13. International development cooperation played a crucial role in closing the financing gap and complementing domestic resources. Governments must prioritize investment in education, training, skills development, social protection and infrastructure. Official development assistance (ODA) was still important to the least developed countries, and partners must deliver on their commitments in that area. Another area of concern was curbing some $60 billion in illicit financial flows from Africa, which surpassed the annual aid volume. Such action would unlock significant resources for development.

14. Leveraging technology and innovation required targeted investment in infrastructure such as broadband connectivity in order to reach the poorest. Technological applications could be useful in such areas as financial inclusion, environmental monitoring and providing meteorological data to small farmers. However, Africa still lagged in access to information and communications technology (ICT); only 18 per cent of households had Web access and the digital gender gap, which was shrinking in most of the world, had actually widened in Africa.

15. Harnessing technology at the local level required an enormous investment in infrastructure development as a key driver for progress. It was shameful that millions of rural Africans still lacked electricity, sanitation and clean drinking water in the age of the fourth industrial revolution. African women should not have to spend hours every day carrying water for drinking and cooking.

16. Conflict prevention and tackling emerging threats to peace and security were indispensable to building resilience. Understanding the interaction between natural disasters, environmental hazards and other triggers of conflict would be crucial for tackling it root

causes. Support for African initiatives was needed in order to create the Africa that the Africans wanted.

17. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project) asked whether there was strong political will to engage women and youth as development actors and not just beneficiaries, and if so, whether the right policies were in place to support them.

18. **Ms. Gavanas** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa) said that there had been significant progress in women's participation but more must be done. Women for the most part provided the resilience of their communities during difficult times, yet they still lacked decision-making power. The women who operated market stalls might not have educational credentials or degrees, yet they were important participants in economic activity that built their communities. Youth presented a challenge because there was little economic opportunity for them and the current move to downsize the public sector meant that Governments should not be counted on to provide employment. Partnership with the private sector seemed to be the best way forward in that case.

19. **Ms. Ibrahim** (Senior Vice-President and Head of Market Area, Middle East and Africa, Ericsson), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that technology had enabled various forms of innovation and had helped to build inclusion and resilience in Africa. Integrated public policy was critical to address the challenges and to enable inclusion.

20. More than half the population of the African continent had access to services to meet their basic needs, and mobile technology could drive social and economic growth. A study that Ericsson had conducted with the Imperial College, London, in 2017 had revealed that every 10 per cent increase in mobile broadband penetration resulted in up to 2.8 per cent in economic growth. It was clear, therefore, that increased access to mobile technology was a positive factor in macroeconomic development. Technology also supported the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 3 on health, Goal 4 on education and Goal 5 on gender equality.

21. Africa remained the fastest growing mobile market, with 800 million subscribers, or 65 per cent of the population, in 2017. With an anticipated annual growth rate of 6 per cent over the coming five years, there would be 1 billion subscribers by 2023. The infrastructure necessary to support those new subscribers must be cost-efficient and robust. The increased use of virtual reality and streaming services would require higher speeds and greater bandwidth with lower latency. In attempting to ensure broad access, Governments should look at spectrum allocations, as the lower end of the spectrum, from 700 to 800 mhz, could be useful to provide coverage for rural areas and villages, as long as they were complemented by appropriate access to higher bands. Her company had collaborated with the Columbia University Earth Institute, Millennium Hope and other telecom companies to provide access to villages, but more private companies must become involved.

22. Mobile money solutions such as the mobile wallet had led to greater financial inclusion. Smartphones had put financial services within reach of farmers, women and entrepreneurs with home-based businesses, for example. Even governments were using mobile and online solutions for health insurance payments and many other types of services and had found that they increased revenues. Some thought was needed on how to use that toolkit in a better way and to make it fast and secure so that financial institutions would also be interested.

23. People were Africa's greatest asset, and they should be equipped with the needed skills in such areas as data science and mobile commerce. Her company had thus begun a training programme in ICT for primary school girls in Cameroon and South Africa which they hoped to expand. In order to build resilience and accelerate inclusion through mobile connectivity, infrastructure must be in place, phones must be affordable and consumers educated on their use. It was also important to harmonize public policy across countries and increase collaboration between the private and public sectors through incentives for innovation.

24. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project), raising the matter of corporate social responsibility, asked what advice she would give Member States and civil society in designing a value proposition to motivate private sector investment in development.

25. **Ms. Ibrahim** (Senior Vice-President and Head of Market Area, Middle East and Africa, Ericsson) said that the essence of her company's involvement in development projects was the desire to do something good for the people. Actions toward achieving the goal of a sustainable future for Africa would build the company's future also. Incentives were also needed, however. Government sectors could support start-ups and universities in collaborations or invite them to set up development hubs. Those joint efforts must find the right balance between corporate and government involvement.

26. **Mr. Selker** (Director of International Sales, Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory (TAHMO)), panellist, accompanying his remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that the Observatory was a specific example of technology addressing some of the issues raised in the discussion on resilience and innovation. The story of the Observatory had begun in 2010 when two scientists conducting a hydrology experiment in West Africa had looked for precipitation data for earlier years and had found no record of such fundamental data. They had then set about the ambitious task of providing weather monitoring across the whole continent. Forty years earlier there had been good weather data for Africa, but over the years weather stations had slowly gone silent.

27. Weather information was foundational to resilience as it affected such important areas as agriculture, infrastructure and natural disaster preparedness. Among challenges to the climate observation system was the legitimate competition for limited public funds and a lack of sustainability in the network of weather stations, which had generally been set up from a short-term, project-based approach but not maintained. Economies of scale were also important, as data was needed on a continental scale rather than country by country. Unfortunately, satellites had not been able to fill that need — they were able to show cloud cover, for instance, but could not measure how much rain had actually reached the ground.

28. Weather data was part of critical infrastructure with a known value to agriculture, infrastructure, the economy and health, and the data and its collection infrastructure also had a future scientific and economic value that was as yet unknown. Africa held 60 per cent of the world's arable land and excellent water resources, and was poised to play an important role in the coming century. The technology revolution provided opportunity through improved ability to collect, store and process data and to share it by bringing it directly to users like farmers through the expanded availability and use of smartphones. The weather station itself had been designed through a public-private partnership. It had no moving parts and was powered by a solar panel the size of a business card. It could detect rain, wind, humidity and even lightning up to 40 km. away.

29. Of course, technology alone would not fix the problem or guarantee sustainability. A concerted effort had been made to partner fully with Governments by providing the data from the weather stations to their weather services and any scientific endeavours free of charge, selling the data to private organizations like IBM, which owned The Weather Channel, in order to fund the system. There were currently some 500 stations installed, with a goal of 20,000. As an example of the benefits of reaching that goal, there would then be enough local data available to support crop insurance claims for African farmers, which was currently not possible. Those weather stations could be set up for one-tenth the cost of a traditional station. The ultimate source of resilience was human education, and thus most of the weather stations had been placed at schools. The stations were used in science, geography, mathematics, engineering and statistics education, and monthly research challenges were set for the students. A school-to-school programme paired those schools with schools in the United States to connect across cultures.

30. To summarize, he listed the keys to success as reliable and inexpensive technology, full partnership with Governments, a sustained enterprise approach rather than a short-term project approach, and the production of data on a continent-wide scale that was attractive to private enterprise.

31. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project) asked whether the greatest challenge was capacity or political will.

32. **Mr. Selker** (Director of International Sales, Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory (TAHMO)) said that the considerable success achieved demonstrated that both the capacity and the political will existed; the greatest challenge had been moving from a project-based to an enterprise mindset, especially given the low cost of the technology. Government meteorology departments had also been somewhat isolated, and some effort was needed to instil a mindset of data sharing.

33. **The President** asked about the plan for maintenance of the weather stations in order to ensure their sustainability.

34. **Mr. Selker** (Director of International Sales, Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory (TAHMO)) said that a network of company staff travelled throughout Africa to check on the stations and maintain them. Students at the schools where they were placed also were involved in their cleaning and maintenance. With no moving parts, the stations were designed to last, and because of their low cost, their replacement was not a great burden.

35. **Mr. Ogure** (Coordinator, Map Kibera Trust, Kenya), panellist, said that he made his home in Kibera, an informal settlement and slum of Nairobi, Kenya, which was actually the largest slum in Africa. In 2009, Kibera was simply a blank spot on Government maps. Its residents felt marginalized, ignored and neglected by

that omission, and they decided that they wanted to show the world their home. Thus, thirteen youths from each of the thirteen villages making up Kibera walked around their neighbourhoods equipped with GPS devices on their mobile phones mapping all the points of interest and what was important to them. With the help of OpenStreetMap, they produced the first digital map of Kibera. That map was congested with information, and thus, through a community forum, ten categories of information were broken down to four main areas — health, security, water and sanitation and education — and a map on each topic was produced.

36. One of the mandates of the Map Kibera project was to increase influence and representation of the marginalized communities through creative use of digital technology for action. After the mapping was completed, the group decided to introduce citizen journalism to give people a platform to speak about the issues highlighted by the map. The Voice of Kibera website (voiceofkibera.org) was formed to allow people both to send and receive reports and information by SMS. That was followed by a video platform created by youths walking around the neighbourhood with video cameras interviewing residents, which gave them a platform to tell stories from their perspective. The videos were posted on a YouTube channel and shared with the relevant authorities, responders and policy-makers for action.

37. In an effort to go deeper into the use of the mapped data, the Open Schools Kenya project produced a profile page for each school in the neighbourhood, with the aim of making the information accessible to parents and students so that they could make an informed choice about schooling for their children. Groups often came to Kibera to conduct research projects, yet the results were never shared with the residents, and thus, in an effort to be transparent, each school was given a printed copy of the education map and shown how to use its profile page from the website. Many of the schools in Kibera were informal, and the Member of Parliament for Kibera had made use of the data to upgrade them and secure government help, arguing that the schools might be informal but the students were not — they were citizens who also deserved services from the Government. Going offline to ensure that no one was left behind, the subject maps had been painted on walls throughout the neighbourhood as well. The aim of all the projects was to fight the mentality that Kibera was a bad place by showing that there were good things in the community as well as good people.

38. The project had moved into other informal settlements to train people in the technology, ideas and skills needed to map their own areas. The World Bank was partnering in mapping of projects within the counties so that, under the participatory budgeting model, they could decide what the greatest investment needs were — for example schools, hospitals, markets — and where they should be placed. In those ways and many others, the Map Kibera project had tried to leverage technology to support innovation and inclusiveness.

39. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project) asked about the cost implications for users of the digital platforms mentioned and whether that had an impact on the number of people making use of them. In her view, Africa lacked a culture of accountability, and she wondered whether the increased citizen engagement described had led to more accountability by the Government in meeting its commitments.

40. **Mr. Ogure** (Coordinator, Map Kibera Trust, Kenya) said that the cost to users of sending a message by SMS was very low. Experience had shown that the minimal cost had cut down on the amount of junk messages received; a cost to the user, even a small cost, meant that only serious messages would be sent.

41. Kibera News Network had earned the trust of the community because it was run by residents and depicted the real situation. There was little trust in mainstream media, which only came to the area when there was a crisis which they could show in a negative light. Tagging the relevant authorities and others with video reports had been very effective in getting swift action. A recent example was the video of schools being demolished in Kibera to make way for the expansion of the Kenya-Uganda railway, which had been tagged to the World Bank, Amnesty International and the Government and had received a powerful response.

42. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) said that the power of cooperation was crucial to resilience. Morocco was making South-South cooperation with African countries a priority and had entered into a number of projects and partnerships with its African neighbours, most recently possible agricultural cooperation with Liberia and economic cooperation with Nigeria.

43. Regarding the use of technology and innovation, it would not be possible to make the most effective use of technology without capacity-building, especially in the most fragile countries. She would like to hear more about concrete solutions for capacity-building, especially in areas where there was a lack of infrastructure.

44. **Ms. Triyanti** (United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth) said that the idea of a sustainable

network approach would not work without leadership. She would be interested to know if there were best practices regarding the type of leadership needed, what worked in Africa for sustainability, and whether there were any multi-stakeholder partnerships where science and research institutions had been included in the process of evidence-based policy making. Regarding education, it was her view that in the context of disaster reduction and conflict, investment in capacity-building and education for young people and girls was just as important as investment in relief and rehabilitation, as it would define resilience for the future.

45. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project), posing questions received on Instagram and Twitter, asked how it was possible to speak of resilience for innovation in a context where the vast majority of new intellectual property filings had come from Asia, the United States of America and Europe, but none from Africa, according to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). A participant from social media would also like to know what policy environment was needed to achieve inclusion.

46. **Ms. Jallah** (Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Liberia) said that to expand public-private partnerships, it was important to train youth to take over the new systems to ensure their long-term sustainability and national ownership. Collaborative leadership was needed so that countries could come together around common goals and achieve buy-in to the new situation.

47. As for policy, it was important to answer basic questions, first by setting targets — what was the problem to be solved? Next, a strategy was needed — what action should be taken? Lastly, the question must be asked: who would pay?

48. **Ms. Gawanas** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa) said that the causes of conflict had to do with exclusion and a sense that people were not part of decisions affecting their lives. With regard to leadership, the people knew best and must participate in solutions for sustainable impact. A policy environment that promoted inclusion was needed.

49. With regard to intellectual property, innovation did not happen in isolation, and ideas must be backed up by resources and protected. More thought was needed on how to accomplish that. In order to increase policy coherence and integration, the various ministries within governments must speak to each other and harmonize approaches.

50. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project), said that a participant had asked on Twitter where the funding was for the innovations being discussed; there were many solutions but no capacity to implement them.

51. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that the fact that the African continent had overcome slavery and apartheid demonstrated the existence of political will. Youth was a main theme of activities within the African Union, and the youth had overcome many challenges. There were significant efforts in the area of capacity-building; in fact the African Union had established its first development administration institute in 1967, over 50 years earlier. Innovative projects such as Map Kibera were very exciting; it was important to push as hard as possible for funding for such activities.

52. **Ms. Ibrahim** (Senior Vice-President and Head of Market Area, Middle East and Africa, Ericsson) suggested that in terms of capacity-building, Internet access was still not broad, and the little-used analogue television spectrum would be more cost-effective in expanding coverage.

53. The private sector was already well-represented in Africa, and Government policies could be drafted requiring them to give back to the community in terms of innovation and infrastructure in order to support innovation hubs, for instance. With regard to intellectual property, mobile money was a good example. If such a product was locally created, it belonged to its creators and could be resold to produce funds for investment in innovation.

54. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project) said that governance at its best enabled, and at its worst impeded, development. She asked the panellists to comment on what could be done about factors that undermined transformation in Africa.

55. **The President** said that he would like to hear more about how technology could be used to assist the disabled in Africa. He was also interested to know if weather data could be used by urban planners to improve conditions in slums and other informal settlements by guiding decisions on whether informal settlements should be made permanent or moved to safer and more hospitable locations. The cities of Africa were growing and expanding at a rapid pace and some rational planning was needed.

56. **Mr. Selker** (Director of International Sales, Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory (TAHMO)) said that his organization was founded by scientists and the data it produced was intended to be free for use by other scientists, in support of intellectual property rights. In terms of future planning, the climate

was changing, and although there was currently no record of past changes for Africa, it would be important to have a long data set in the future to guide the response to changing conditions. Although most existing weather stations were in rural areas because of the focus on providing data for agriculture, it would certainly be possible to place stations at schools in unofficial settlements in the care of motivated students. The existence of a settlement became more legitimate when data about it had been collected.

57. **Mr. Ogure** (Coordinator, Map Kibera Trust, Kenya) said that Kibera had a population of 400,000 people living on 2.5 square km.; the population was highly diverse. Capacity-building had been key to the project. Board members had encountered a group of enthusiastic youth, who themselves had come up with the idea of using OpenStreetMap, although most had never touched a computer before the project; they had started from scratch. It was illegal for people to live on the land on which Kibera lay, but people with no alternatives had encroached on the space anyway, and the systems to support it were not working. The issue of permanence had been raised; it had been argued that the Government had to give notice of eviction and also provide somewhere else for the residents to go. UN-Habitat was coming in to help, and the company building the railway expansion was also building permanent housing for residents. The expectation was that through such efforts, the slum would eventually disappear.

58. **Ms. Phaladi** (Founder and Executive Director, Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project) invited the panellists to share the commitments to action by their respective countries and organizations.

59. **Mr. Ogure** (Coordinator, Map Kibera Trust, Kenya) said that knowledge was power, and his organization would endeavour to make the invisible visible using data and citizen journalism. Its commitment was to spread those methods across Africa with help from all development partners.

60. **Mr. Selker** (Director of International Sales, Trans-African Hydro-Meteorological Observatory (TAHMO)) said that his organization had a commitment to pay attention to the quality of data it produced. The efficiency and sustainability of the effort to acquire data and the buy-in and collective interest it had attracted would carry the project into the future.

61. **Ms. Ibrahim** (Senior Vice-President and Head of Market Area, Africa and Middle East, Ericsson) said that policy formulation was of critical importance, and that the United Nations could play a role in that dialogue. Her company had a strong commitment to the expansion of broadband access in Africa, to be demonstrated by her attendance at the forthcoming Broadband Commission meeting in Rwanda.

62. **Ms. Gawanas** (Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa) said that the world as a whole had set the Agenda 2030, and Africa had set its own agenda through 2063. The international community must now find coherence and support Africa accordingly. South-South cooperation was critical in allowing countries to learn from each other and to take advantage of economies of scale.

63. **Ms. Jallah** (Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Liberia) said that she was committed to taking the best practices gained through dialogue back home to her country. She would look to the United Nations for help in acquiring technology tailored to the regional context and in enhancing cross-border detection of infectious diseases.

64. **The President**, concluding the discussion, said that the members of the panel had given him great hope for the future of Africa.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.